

duties requirements for the administrative exemption even if they must consult with higher management officials when making a commitment.

(n) Ordinary inspection work generally does not meet the duties requirements for the administrative exemption. Inspectors normally perform specialized work along standardized lines involving well-established techniques and procedures which may have been catalogued and described in manuals or other sources. Such inspectors rely on techniques and skills acquired by special training or experience. They have some leeway in the performance of their work but only within closely prescribed limits.

**§ 551.207 Professional exemption criteria.**

To qualify for the professional exemption, an employee's primary duty must be the performance of work requiring knowledge of an advanced type in a field of science or learning customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction or requiring invention, imagination, originality or talent in a recognized field of artistic or creative endeavor. Learned professionals, creative professionals, and computer employees are described in §§ 551.208, 551.209, and 551.210, respectively.

**§ 551.208 Learned professionals.**

(a) To qualify for the learned professional exemption, an employee's primary duty must be the performance of work requiring advanced knowledge in a field of science or learning customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction. The work must include the following three elements:

(1) The employee must perform work requiring advanced knowledge. Work requiring advanced knowledge is predominantly intellectual in character and includes work requiring the consistent exercise of discretion and judgment, as distinguished from performance of routine mental, manual, mechanical or physical work. An employee who performs work requiring advanced knowledge generally uses the advanced knowledge to analyze, interpret or make deductions from varying

facts or circumstances. Advanced knowledge cannot be attained at the high school level;

(2) The advanced knowledge must be in a field of science or learning which includes the traditional professions of law, medicine, theology, accounting, actuarial computation, engineering, architecture, teaching, various types of physical, chemical and biological sciences, pharmacy, and other similar occupations that have a recognized professional status as distinguished from the mechanical arts or skilled trades where in some instances the knowledge is of a fairly advanced type, but is not in a field of science or learning; and

(3) The advanced knowledge must be customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction which restricts the exemption to professions where specialized academic training is a standard prerequisite for entrance into the profession. The best prima facie evidence that an employee meets this requirement is possession of the appropriate academic degree. However, the word "customarily" means that the exemption is appropriate for employees in such professions who have substantially the same knowledge level and perform substantially the same work as the degreed employees, but who attained the advanced knowledge through a combination of work experience and intellectual instruction. For example, the learned professional exemption is appropriate in unusual cases where a lawyer has not gone to law school, or a chemist does not possess a degree in chemistry. However, the learned professional exemption is not applicable to occupations that customarily may be performed with only the general knowledge acquired by an academic degree in any field, with knowledge acquired through an apprenticeship, or with training in the performance of routine mental, manual, mechanical, or physical processes. The learned professional exemption also does not apply to occupations in which most employees have acquired their